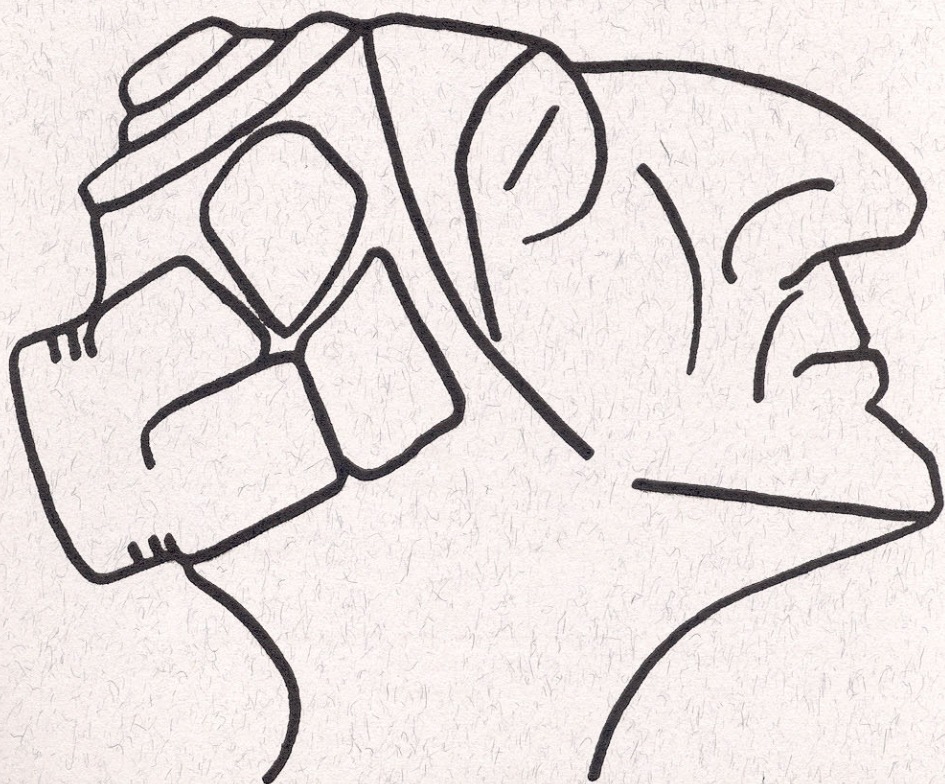


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# SYNTHESIS: WILL O' THE WISP OF NEW WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY

RUTH V. EVANS

## *Abstract*

For over a decade there had been a general dissatisfaction with American archaeology's objectives, accomplishments, and relationship to other disciplines. Then, in 1948, its weaknesses—for example, the predominance of concern with narrow, unrelated studies—together with suggestions for fresh approach and direction, were most definitely articulated by Walter W. Taylor. It would, therefore, seem appropriate to compare Taylor and his proposals with V. Gordon Childe, who, in his impressive work toward synthesis in the Old World, had become the model by which other scholars measured themselves and their work.

The main differences between Childe and Taylor lie in the nature of their tasks and variations in approach necessary for work in their respective areas. Each was interested in synthesis as a goal; Taylor was interested in a closer alliance with cultural anthropology, while Childe saw the main task to be the writing of history in as full a manner as possible. Taylor hoped to study individual and whole cultures as intensively as possible, while Childe was trying to trace a tradition through a number of individual cultures over a wide territory.

The movement of which Taylor was the most coherent spokesman has been under way for two decades and is beginning to show good results. However, the trends which he criticized are still prominent. There is still need for more imaginative reconstruction based on both ethnographical and archaeological data, and for the further articulation of basic purpose in American archaeology.

## INTRODUCTION

For over a decade there had been a general atmosphere of dissatisfaction hovering over the field of archaeology. This dissatisfaction was centered on the objectives, the accomplishments, and the place of archaeology in respect to other disciplines. There was general agreement that its scholars had gone far enough in elaborating on the old techniques and needed to start off in a new direction.

In 1948, Walter W. Taylor added his voice to the others,<sup>1</sup> but he was more concrete in his criticism and in his evaluation of the level of achievement; he also proposed a theory and a method by which he hoped these limitations could be overcome. As a result, he contributed to archaeology a definition of its problems and encouraged a new line of endeavor which is well on its way toward bringing the discipline back into the main stream of cultural anthropology.

He was extremely critical of many of his archaeological colleagues, elders and contemporaries alike; A. V. Kidder, Emil

1. Taylor, 1948.



Haury, James W. Griffin, and others—even though some had a stated interest in historical reconstruction—all came under his criticism. As he saw it, there was a widespread divergence, confusion, and indifference to theory which had failed to result in any effort to resolve conflicts and come to grips with the main questions. Specifically, he noted certain weaknesses which the work of each archaeologist had in one degree or another: there was a predominance of concern with narrow, unrelated studies; there had been no description and analysis which might approach comprehensiveness; there was seeming satisfaction with superficiality, contentment merely with classification of ceramic sequences over broad areas; there was an extreme hesitancy to make inferences of any kind, even if there were data to back them up; and, most unforgivably, there was a lack of thoroughness in gathering data, a failure to note the context of material collected and a failure to quantify data, meaning that much was probably irretrievably lost and forever beyond reconstruction. All of these could be related to an overall weakness, lack of a clear purpose. It was this that Taylor was attempting to establish.

All of this is not to say that the former purposes and methods were not a result of the problems at hand in the Western Hemisphere or were not in themselves an advance over previous objectives and methods. The essential point is that archaeologists had gone as far as they could go in the directions established previously and needed to put forth their efforts into more productive avenues.

Among others who were already thinking along these lines were Julian Steward and Frank Setzler, J. W. Bennett, and Irving Rouse, as well as a number of others who had made tentative efforts in the direction that Taylor had in mind. These men had stated the problem, enunciated some common principles and tentatively suggested some possible approaches. Nevertheless, the task still remained to express these ideas in a definitive and theoretical way and to delineate a method whereby they could be put into practice. Julian Steward and Frank Setzler were distressed at the degree to which archaeology and cultural anthropology had been growing apart instead of contributing to mutual problems.<sup>2</sup> They deplored similar trends in each: interest in spatial distribution for its own sake and concern with classification with the use to be made of it not always being evident. Also the increasing emphasis of cultural anthropology on func-

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2. Steward and Setzler, 1938, p. 4.

tion and psychology was coming at the same time that archaeology was de-emphasizing functional analysis and sneering at psychological studies, neither discipline able to see in the other the complementary roles which are necessary in solving general problems of culture. Even the definition of function seems to be hazy in the minds of some anthropologists. Function does not tell *why* something happens but how it might fit into a pattern or operate in a context. It is sometimes only one of a number of possible interpretations of the same data. Most often it is used as a way of getting the answer to a question when there is insufficient data to give the actual answer. Although it does not offer a final explanation, it enables a person to make a reasonable hypothesis, or guess, while awaiting further proof. And sometimes it is right. J. W. Bennett discussed some of the contemporary developments taking place in the direction of this kind of interpretation of archaeological data.<sup>3</sup> He was convinced that American archaeology is still in its intense, historical, fact-gathering stage; that all scientific fields have passed through this phase; and that this gives way to a stage of reflection and generalization characterized by the establishment of laws or principles of continuity and an attempt to standardize terminology. He feels that archaeology is now in the later stages of this movement and is coming into a period of synthesization and theoretical formulation. As evidence of this he cites some attempts at the application of functional criteria to historical data: Paul Martin's use of Robert Redfield's concept of "folk society" to explain the nature of small pueblo sites in southern Colorado, for example. Martin found that the larger villages exhibited what Redfield defines as an ideally homogenous society which holds to a fixed traditional pattern, doing things in a prescribed way and changing very slowly. The smaller sites surrounding them tend to show the effects of more rapid change by a wider variety of artifact types, pottery and architectural styles. The more stable villages are easier for an archaeologist to excavate because the pattern is soon identified and this greatly simplifies the procedure; while in the smaller sites, the unexpected is always just around the corner. Bennett also praised Preston Holder and Antonio Waring's analysis of the Southern Death Cult. Holder and Waring see it as similar to modern nativistic movements which are understood as one kind of reaction possible when a culture is threatened by the encroachments of another

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3. Bennett, 1943.

culture with a more highly developed technology. This reaction is characterized by a renewed emphasis on traditional cultural values and group cohesion. This generally means a strengthening of religion often through the preaching of a "messiah," an appeal to the "good old days" when men were strong and virtuous, and an effort to unite for the common defense. The Southern Death Cult was essentially a revival in the Late Mississippian of many Hopewell culture traits of the Middle Woodland period. Many of the symbolic representations show great resemblance to the Aztec ones in central Mexico.

An additional source of dissatisfaction with the state of archaeological endeavor was not often explicitly stated<sup>4</sup> but seems apparent. That is the tacit comparison by American archaeologists of themselves with archaeologists working in Europe and the Middle East who had already moved beyond them in making broad and full syntheses, reconstructing the complex history of old civilizations. Most notable of these were V. Gordon Childe, J. Graham Clarke, Christopher Hawkes and Glyn Daniel. They seemed to be giving Americanists a distinct feeling of inferiority, insofar as Americans had set their sights on synthesis as a goal, and this helped to create a mood to subordinate or sweep away past practices and to surmount a wide range of difficulties in order to come abreast of and possibly surpass the Europeans, a healthy spirit in any enterprise.

Since it appears that Childe was the one who had become pre-eminently the model for achievement and the standard by which others would measure themselves, it might be illuminating, by means of a comparison of interests, theory, and methods, to compare Taylor and his proposals with Childe and his work in order to assess the degree of progress toward synthesis in this hemisphere. In this way, we can estimate the validity of Taylor's objectives and the usefulness of his theory and method. Also, we might see if there are other aspects of the problem which have not been covered. For the purposes of a broad study these two are unequal, especially in the amount of background material available on them and in their individual productivity; but for the purposes of focusing on a specific problem, they may perhaps be considered comparable. Here we will only be looking at the works in which their main ideas are put forth and it is the ideas contained therein which will be compared.

In these works there are many contrasts that stand out at

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4. Rouse, 1958.



first glance and, thus, obscure a number of very significant similarities. The first contrast which impresses us is that of style and approach. Taylor from the onset launches into a polemical discourse which takes little time in getting to the point in as explicit a way as possible. Here is an archaeologist speaking to archaeologists. Childe, on the other hand, does not make us aware that he has a quarrel with anyone. His style is leisurely, philosophical. The ideas are explicit, but the method of arriving at them is not openly apparent, and his attention is directed more toward the general public than the professional archaeologist. Very early he states his main theme and throughout his work there are many variations and connections which interrelate the main themes, each time on different levels of tempo and complexity.

### INTERESTS

Childe's interests appear at first to be general and broad because of the great span of space and time that he covers with such seeming ease, but actually, although he is interested in Man-in-the-large, he has stated in the beginning of his last book, *Prehistory of European Society*, that his one major aim is "to show that even in prehistoric times barbaric societies behaved in a distinctly European way." Taylor, whose interests seem so narrow—the cultural synthesis of single societies—has an interest in ultimately the broadest and fullest possible horizon for the future. Both are interested in archaeology as interpreted through cultural anthropology, but where Taylor calls himself an anthropologist, Childe calls himself a cultural historian. This may be as much due to the history, nature, and necessities of archaeological research in the respective hemispheres as it is to differences in interests between Taylor and Childe.

Partly stylistic and partly methodological, the differences in interest in precision of terminology are quite apparent and quite characteristic. Taylor discusses in sixteen pages distinctions between various concepts of culture. Childe shows a rather blithe disregard for terminological niceties, leaving many definitional problems hanging in midair, picking up a term where useful and making it conform to his overall pattern. He uses the word *culture* in at least three different ways. As an archaeologist, he defines culture as a "durable material expression of an adaptation to an environment that enabled a society to survive and develop,"<sup>5</sup> a definition, by the way, similar to one of Taylor's

5. Childe, 1951b, p. 16.

concepts of culture. As an anthropologist, he seems to mean it as representing a social tradition, but sometimes he uses it somewhat synonymously with *society* or *people*. His use of the terms *savagery*, *barbarism*, and *civilization*, à la Morgan and Engels, to refer to the various stages of cultural evolution has often been criticized as being imprecise and old fashioned. Although Taylor goes to great lengths to clarify differences in concepts, he really does not succeed much better than Childe in clearing the ground for his theory.

Among Childe's main interests, perhaps flowing from an early interest in the classics, have been a wide span of recorded history, abstract science, philosophy and politics. The socialist and evolutionary side of his interests came to the fore in 1935 with the publication of *Man Makes Himself*.<sup>6</sup> Ideas derived from these studies are intertwined in various ways with his archaeological data and link him with the old-style scholars of the 19th century. His conclusions put him in opposition to many other conceptions of historical order which have been held by historians from time to time, and sometimes, by anthropologists. These are theories that attempt to depict historical events as instances of immutable laws or to represent the historical order by an abstract and eternal scheme or even as "a series of interesting happenings often illogical and cataclysmic."<sup>7</sup> Although there are many things which he admires in them, Childe criticizes 19th century evolutionists like Edward Tylor, Herbert Spencer and Lewis H. Morgan, who believed that societies everywhere must have gone through an evolutionary sequence that should have been the same for all of them. He is equally critical of some determinists like Ellsworth Huntington who think that geography is the main determinant of history, because, in Childe's view, man has shaped the geography around him in different ways to serve an increasing variety of needs. He suggests that the Great Man theory is still around—"men who have shaped the course of history." Those who approve of this idea often forget about the circumstances which made the Great Man great. He goes on to disagree with the assumptions of 19th century political economists which still linger on.<sup>8</sup> This tendency may be noticed in an article in a recent issue of *Life Magazine* which describes the man-ape, *Australopithecus*, as defending his property from the trespass of other man-apes—"the survival of

6. Rouse, 1958, p. 83.

7. Quoted by Childe, 1953, p. 33, from Sir Charles Oman.

8. Childe, 1953, pp. 33-59 *passim*.

the fittest."<sup>9</sup> Childe juxtaposes against these theories the idea of history as an orderly and creative process which may be discerned by observing how man has made his living.

Taylor, although he undoubtedly has many private interests, makes little use of them in his work, especially in his major work, "A Study of Archaeology," which has a deliberately limited scope and purpose.

Childe's activities as an excavator and a teacher have always been subordinated to his interest in synthesizing. He discovered one of the most remarkably preserved settlements of the second millenium B.C. in northern Europe but has been considered a bad excavator by some. He held the Abercrombie Chair at the University of Edinburgh but taught very few students. He devoted most of his time to travel, research and synthesis. Only later, at the University of London, did he exert an influence among students.<sup>10</sup> Taylor, on the other hand, is known primarily as a teacher, museum director, and, to a lesser degree, as an excavator.

Each man was interested exclusively in one part of the world: Childe in the Old World and Taylor in the New. Each was interested in synthesis as a goal—a method of relating the accumulated archaeological data so as to make inferences about the cultural behavior of prehistoric man and to do it in such a way as to make it as true to life as possible. Taylor was concerned with increasing the scope of archaeology to include cultural anthropology, seeing it as a step beyond the mere enumeration of events. Childe, however, saw the main task as being the writing of history in as full a manner as possible, but he did see that in the New World a different approach might be necessary since its history is not so complex and its pre-Columbian cultures had not evolved as far as in the Old World; he saw that it is possible to find contemporary primitive people in much the same condition as they have been for centuries. Taylor hoped to study individual and whole cultures as intensively as possible while Childe was trying to trace a tradition through a number of individual cultures over a wide territory, and it is partly as a result of this difference in emphasis that Childe was interested in general laws and Taylor was not.

In "Retrospect," his last published article, which strangely resembles an epitaph, Childe stated that in the 1939 edition of *The Dawn of European Civilization*, he had paid lip-service to

9. MacLeish, 1961, p. 98.

10. Piggott, 1958.



Marxism in a standardized scheme for the description of cultures: "I took from Marxism the idea of the economy as the integrating force in society but I was just as much influenced by Malinowski's functionalism and tried to stick the archaeological bits together by reference to their possible role in a working organism."<sup>11</sup> Marrism, a variant of Marxism then in vogue in the Soviet Union as a reaction against diffusionism, was applied in *Scotland Before the Scots*,<sup>12</sup> a conspicuous failure largely because of a mechanical application of economic determinism.

Pursuing an early interest in philosophy, especially in the field of epistemology, he discovered Durkheim and "a deeper appreciation of his master, Marx."<sup>13</sup> Through Durkheim, he at last felt that he had rid his mind of transcendental laws determining history and of mechanical causes.

The basic core of Marxism which he retained comes from Karl Marx's extremely sketchy historical analysis in *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, published in 1859 (an event which Childe saw as a contribution to the theory of evolution on a par with two other events which took place in the same year: Darwin's publication of *The Origin of the Species* and the vindication of Boucher de Perthe's discovery of Pleistocene Man by Evans, Falconer and Prestwich); and from a succinct resumé of Marx's theory and method by Joseph Stalin called *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, an historical theory with a dialectical method,<sup>14</sup> as Stalin puts it. This was an idea derived from Marx which means a way of studying an event in the light of the internal forces within it which are operating in the direction of change—in terms of its inherent instability rather than stability, continuity, or cohesiveness.

## THEORY

### V. Gordon Childe

Basically, Childe's hypothesis is that the structure of society is in the long run determined by the mode of production, or food quest, which is exploited by a suitable means of production, or technology; and that social relations developed along with this, accompanied by an appropriate ideological superstructure—religion, philosophy, art, etc.—which justifies the social relations and gives them cohesion and continuity. In the evolutionary process, the first thing that changes is the technology, which

11. Childe, 1958a, p. 72.

12. Childe, 1946.

13. Childe, 1958a, p. 73.

14. Stalin, 1939, p. 105.

leads to a change in the economy which, in turn, leads to modifications in the social relations and a complementary revision of the superstructure. This is supposed to be a process which is going on continually with infinite variations. The propelling force of the change is the constant working out of inherent contradictions brought about by the uneven development of these various phenomena and their interaction. This theory seemed to provide him with the *why* of social change but not the *how*. It is this which he seeks through archaeology.

Here, he makes use of a number of familiar concepts which epitomize and describe processes and trends and are mainly in the time dimension (chronological): evolution, revolution, progress and cultural lag. Others are mainly in the space dimension (chorological): diffusion, divergence and convergence.<sup>15</sup>

His analysis proceeds on several levels. Starting with general laws, he goes on to particular and concrete phenomena, working down to his data and then back from there to his general laws. On the first conceptual level, evolution or history is made up of trends and developments tending in one definite direction and is cumulative and progressive in effect.<sup>16</sup> Progress at a certain stage in natural evolution has taken the place of further organic evolution. Changes in adaptation come about through cultural change rather than physical change and, thus, can take place with comparative rapidity as the situation requires. However, progress is only recognized by looking back, by studying the cumulative effect and the stages in its development. Periods of radical cultural change, or revolution, take place from time to time, and the outstanding characteristic of these is the rearrangement of social relations. Periods of cultural lag come as the result of certain stabilizing forces in the natural environment and the technology which tend to maintain the same social relations over a long period of time and lead to great elaboration of the superstructure, as, for example, among the Australian aborigines with their very primitive technology and their extremely complex system of family relationships and marriage regulations. The latter is the reason, according to Childe, why modern primitive societies are not directly comparable to ancient primitive societies. Diffusion is a term which describes processes which operate between cultures, but are not part of culture—acculturation, conquest, migration, trade, stimulus.

15. Childe, 1956, Ch. 8.

16. Childe, 1951b.

The direction which these take is toward divergence or convergence. Cultures diverge because of isolation and converge through population growth and increasing contact and acculturation. Convergence is the predominant trend today and is probably irreversible. The processes of trade, expansion, colonization, and migration are as old as culture, probably, and with them have gone ideas as well as material goods.

On the second level of analysis, as a means of measuring progress, he sets up a number of indices. Of these the most important is population growth, both in size and in kind (specialists), a proof of success in adaptation at every evolutionary stage. Each stage is also distinguished by certain "symbol traits" which not only identify and characterize it; but are "the concrete individual factors that shape the course of history."<sup>17</sup>

Finally, these indices are correlated with concrete data resulting from excavation. Thus, population growth would be measured by a greater number of sites in one area, increase in the number of burials in a single period and the finding of certain items which would imply an advance over the stage before in terms of innovation, complexity, or style. "Symbol traits" seem to represent typology or the critical point in a series which distinguishes one period from another.

For arriving at spatial relationships and to prove diffusion, he relies on distributional maps of various observable traits. These can illustrate concordant distributions, when distributions of two types are found to agree; complementary distribution, when they overlap as in the case of acculturation; and exclusive distribution, when items are rare, as with trade goods.

He sets up three major requirements for evaluating his data: (1) exhaustive, systematic and intensive exploration, collection and excavation should be combined with equally exhaustive, systematic and intensive synthesis of the material; (2) a distinction must be made between categories, between that which is observable and that which is inferred; and (3) distinctions should be made between processes within culture and processes operating between cultures.

*Walter W. Taylor*

Taylor puts forth his proposals both as a theory and as a way of looking at the basic materials of archaeology. He affirms and reiterates that archaeology is a legitimate part of cultural anthropology, that it is anthropology with a time dimension. The differ-

17. Childe, 1951b.



ences are ones of degree, not of kind. Ethnographers only have fuller contexts. Material remains represent people, ideas, and behavior of by-gone days and can be reconstructed by inferring from the material remains as found by the archaeologist.

Theoretically, he understands himself as primarily an empiricist, that is, his theory must be essentially tentative; but actually, in the course of arriving at inferences, he finds it necessary to visualize the "ethnological goal" at the inception of archaeological work and not at the end, a process which should lead him increasingly away from a strictly empirical point of view. Any theory necessarily starts out as a hypothesis, as a way of ordering data, and becomes ultimately a synthesis of experience and the basis for a new hypothesis and a broader synthesis. The real difference between Taylor's theory and Childe's theory is that they are on different levels of synthesis.

Taylor goes to great lengths to make distinctions between varying ideas of culture because he believes that archaeology needs a concept of culture which is especially suited for archaeological materials and techniques and yet is not in conflict with concepts useful to other anthropological materials and techniques. Instead of looking for a single, all-embracing definition, he analyzes the term and finds that the word actually contains two concepts, not just one. They are related but distinct and on two different levels of abstraction, creating an ambivalence which he feels is the basis for many misconceptions. The first concept is holistic and is used to distinguish "cultural" from "natural." The other concept, on a secondary level of abstraction, is partitive and denotes a segment of the holistic concept, i.e., *a* culture. Questions of "natural" or "cultural" come up all the time on surveys or during excavation. They are similar in nature to the questions about biologically determined traits and culturally determined traits, especially in psychologically-oriented studies. A culture is a subdivision of culture and is defined as a historically derived system of culture traits whose separate traits tend to be shared by all or by specially designated individuals of a group or society.

He lists the premises which he feels are necessary for the proper study of culture through archaeology or cultural anthropology:

1. Culture is a *mental* phenomenon; ideas, not just a collection of artifacts.
2. Cultural content is a heritage of the past and cumulative; we are able to progress because we are able to build on

pre-existing cultural foundations.

3. Elements or traits of culture are unobservable and must be inferred from their objectifications, from behavior or the results of behavior.
4. Processes such as diffusion, culture contact, and acculturation do not constitute culture. They pertain to culture, but are not confined to it. Culture consists of ideas, not process, as an engine consists of pistons and sparkplugs, not of combustion or electrical energy.

Taylor's method sets forth what he calls the conjunctive approach, which is concerned with interrelationships *within* a particular cultural entity, and is in opposition to the comparative approach which is concerned with data which has relationships *outside* of the cultural unit. In the conjunctive approach there are five levels of analysis. The first is a definition of the problem or the hypothesis; second, the gathering, analysis and criticism of empirical data; third, ordering data in chronological sequence; fourth, the search for and establishment of reciprocal relationships within the series; and fifth, the reconstruction of the cultural context. The first four are in the realm of history and are mainly descriptive. The last, however, falls within the province of cultural anthropology and has an explanatory purpose. Ethnographical research is necessary at both the first and the fifth levels.

For inspiration, Taylor suggests going to the following important sources of information before, during, and especially after, field work:

1. *Outline of Cultural Materials*<sup>18</sup> or *Notes and Queries on Anthropology*.<sup>19</sup>
2. Ethnography of local peoples.
3. Quantitative analyses from which graphs can be made in plotting percentages.
4. Quality standards — consideration of the differential emphasis, integration and excellence of two techniques, e.g., ceramics.
5. Conjunctives between people and environment, floral and faunal analysis.

### EVALUATION

When it comes to techniques of gathering basic data or establishing sequences, archaeologists haven't had much to argue

18. Murdock *et al.*, 1945.

19. Royal Anthropological Institute, 1929.

about. The basic principles and procedures of excavation were established a long time ago and innovations have come about as a result of particular circumstances and problems. Differences usually have arisen over interpretation, but even here there has not been as much latitude for disagreement as in some disciplines, since everywhere they are limited by empirical knowledge. If someone strays too far away, there are always those who will bring him back to the disagreeable realities of life. Their data keep them on a rather short rope. It is this situation which leads to the underlying similarities between Taylor and Childe.

Both are required to be materialistic in their approach, as are other archaeologists, because the most successfully preserved and most easily observed cultural items are always basic material implements used in gaining a livelihood. This is a strain which has come to them as one of the primary postulates of cultural anthropology, gained through observation of the other basic source of data, living primitive men. Both Childe and Taylor are committed to the concept of evolution. Although Taylor has as one of his basic premises that cultural content is cumulative and able to progress, there is no inkling of what implications this has for him, since he does not elaborate. However, we can assume an agreement on principle. Even in ideas centering around diffusion, often a subject for great controversy, they both offer the same warnings: watch out! diffusion is not culture!

The main differences between Childe and Taylor lie not so much in themselves as in the nature of the respective tasks and variations in necessary approach for each. Taylor is saying that we may not have the material for an over-all synthesis, but we do have enough information for single areas and we should make the most of it by concentrating our energy where it will count the most.

His theory is useful because it poses a problem suitable for study and puts forth realizable objectives. Also it holds forth the promise of a fruitful alliance with cultural anthropology in providing a well-rounded description and analysis of a culture. The concept of a tradition as developed in South American archaeology can go far to provide a new dimension to human personality, to institutions and to values, for it is only as history links up with the present that it carries its full meaning.

The movement of which Taylor was the most coherent spokesman, even if not the greatest practitioner, has already been under way for over two decades, and we are beginning to



see some good results.<sup>20</sup> However, the trends which he criticized are still prominent.<sup>21</sup>

What is needed are more imaginative reconstructions based on both ethnographical and archaeological data, narrative in style and with the methodology concealed, not pre-empting the stage. Such a style is more important than might be supposed, since it would force a re-evaluation of the materials. Too many reports in archaeology purporting to be a synthesis tell only about what the excavator did and how he did it, without much understanding of the why, which lies in the field of culture. Some of the recent "syntheses" are to real syntheses as travelogues are to ethnography, giving us a schedule of the trip and indicating the landmarks, but telling us very little about the people met along the way.

Functional interpretation, which provides the motivational element which would bring dead cultures back to life, has been much talked about, but, like the weather, nothing has been done about it. A needed impetus might come about if archaeologists tried to write more for the general public, juvenile and adult alike. Even on the juvenile level it would require much hard work. There would be a feedback in general benefits for the field; stimulation of general interest and support, the establishment of local archaeological societies which might lead to the discovery of new sites and the recruitment of many more people into the field. Many countries in the world have purposely encouraged archaeology on a large scale, usually in the service of national pride. If there is an equally strong purpose behind American archaeological work, it may arise from a sense of atonement, or perhaps from a desire to instill in a people whose culture is fast disappearing a national pride in their own heritage, similar to that developing in the American Negro; or perhaps merely from a drive to solve great historical problems. Insofar as some larger overriding purpose guides an interpretation, and inasmuch as it conforms to the nature of the data, by that much will an interpretation be true to life both in spirit and in fact. This is a level beyond Taylor's fifth level which he should have included. With Childe it was both the beginning and the end.

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20. Tchopik, 1950; Kehoe, 1958.

21. Willey, 1955; Steward, 1955.

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# GENERIC WESTERN NAMES IDENTIFIABLE IN THE SOUTHEAST

HAROLD A. HUSCHER

## *Abstract*

At the time of the DeSoto expedition no buffalo were encountered in the entire Southeast, nor were definite hunting cultures specifically described. A hundred years later Spanish and English records consistently refer to buffalo-hunting wild tribes in the interior, always as coming from farther north and west. Southeastern tribal names may well be re-examined by comparison with Western name classes on the same time levels.

The important Yuchi-Chiska name is very widely spread, with meanings of "People," "Little People," or in compounds, "Children of—". The -luche, -uche endings with diminutive or "People" meanings run diagonally from the Upper Missouri area down to the Southeast, and there is a late extension through Basin Shoshonean. The Chiska, Tshishe-ka forms center in the Athapaskan-Siouan languages vis-à-vis in the Plains, with the Siouan forms more probably secondary.

The Coza-Coosa names are important because of their early occurrence on the Georgia-Carolina Coast. Identification of these names as "Muskogean," hence the direct equation with later "Muskogean" names such as Kasihta or Koasati is highly misleading. The occurrence of widely spread Kho-, Ku-, Kus- forms meaning "Corn" (Catawba, Crow-Mandari, East Mexico) suggest the common-denominator value "Corn Farmers" applied by the nonagricultural Coastal peoples. Later Kos- values from the west need not be related.

Buffalo People, Hunting People names become important as a class because the Southeastern yana- words for buffalo are continuous to the west with the -lyana, -ayan forms of Lipanan Athapaskan languages of the South Plains as recorded by the DeSoto-Coronado expeditions.

At the time of the DeSoto expedition no buffalo were encountered in the entire Southeast, nor were definite hunting cultures specifically described. There is one mention of a buffalo-hide robe, apparently a trade item, and there is mention of buffalo to the north when the expedition was somewhere in the Memphis-East Arkansas area. The buffalo robe from "Chiska," somewhere to the north, was described as "... a cowhide as delicate as calf-skin, ... the hair being like the soft wool of the cross of the merino with the common sheep." In this northern region corn-raising was impossible, since "no cornfield could be protected from the buffalo."<sup>1</sup>

A hundred years later, however, Spanish and English records are consistent in referring to buffalo-hunting wild tribes in the interior, both historical and later ethnographic accounts implying movements from farther north and west. In 1639 the Wild People are specifically identified under the name Ysicas or Chiskas as coming from New Mexico, i.e., from the west of the Mississippi, and are described as already friends of the Spanish. In

1. Wording from the Hidalgo de Elvas, Hodge, 1959, pp. 182, 213.

1677 the Chiskas and Chichimecos (Chichutecas) are distinguished (actually the names are the same) and the Chiskas are then raiding the Apalaches, hence are considered enemies of the Spanish. An expedition to punish them found them living in a palisaded town, with sentry-boxes, here possibly tower-bastions.<sup>2</sup> The descriptions of the invading peoples often specify that they are White People who live in Stone Houses. The Athapaskan name Iyande, meaning Buffalo People, would be heard by a Siouan-speaker as Inyan-ti, or Stone House (People). In Kiowan, the -iya- (un-nasalized) forms would translate as Little People, but would require endings such as -kia, -takia, or -ko (-go). The Inyan words would not be translatable as names in Southeastern languages. Because of the possibility of throwing light on tribal relationships and tribal movements from west to east, Southeastern tribal names may well be reexamined by direct comparison, whole-word comparison, with Western name-classes on comparable time levels.

In 1922 Swanton published a definitive statement which has greatly influenced subsequent work in the Southeast<sup>3</sup>: "The earliest historical name for the Yuchi was Chiska or Chisca. I assert this confidently on the basis of information contained in very early Spanish documents . . ." (continuing with the argument that the name occurrences are mutually exclusive). The important Chiska-Yuchi type of name is very widely spread, both forms being diminutives and carrying meanings of People, Little People, or "Children of (Such and Such)," i.e., clan-derived designations. However, these forms, words and meanings are only generics, and are completely meaningless unless found compounded, the reason lying in the sign language of the Plains, where this type of name originates. To say "Children of the Fox," "Children of the Rabbit," or "Children of the Turkey," the sign for the animal must first be made, then the sign for little, half, half-size, half-high, children (possibly also Cut-Off). The verbalizations of these sign language names may take a wide variety of forms in areas where a number of different languages are interacting, but all Little People names, wherever found, in whatever language, may with confidence be ruled out as completely indeterminate. It is only the compounded or secondarily derived forms that can be used in name determination, and then only if they can be shown to apply to single groups with clear

2. Swanton, 1922, p. 299.

3. Swanton, 1922, p. 288.

continuity in time and space. As a methodological procedure all names must be considered generics until they are shown to be carrying specific identifications. The forms, words and meanings, are separate and independent variables, and every occurrence, singly or compounded, must be separately appraised, and carried in suspense unless more specifically identified in context. To avoid unnecessary documentation of the following remarks I have selected, wherever possible, median forms from the *Handbook of the American Indian*.

The Chis-ka, Tshishe-ka forms, with meanings of Children, Little People, center in the Athapaskan-Siouan languages vis-à-vis in the Plains, with the Siouan forms more probably secondary. (This judgment is based on the fact that the most comparable, most closely related forms, are found in kinship terminologies of the Athapaskans). I cite the Jicarilla form, shi-chesh-ke, my children (constantly repeated in the ritual texts recorded by Pliny Earle Goddard,<sup>4</sup> particularly the Pesita texts, and the Santee chis-, chis-tin forms from Riggs<sup>5</sup> Dakota Dictionary. In wider context, another value is operative—this is the chish, shish, meaning wood, People of the Woods, an Athapaskan form recorded as Chish-gai, Chishkai, Tshishi-dinne, People of the Woods, one of the names of the Chiricahua Apache, but found at a very early date in the St. Lawrence area as Chise-rhonon, People of the Woods, and recorded as far south as Central Mexico (Mihoa-can, Nahuatl).<sup>6</sup> Because the -ka endings may translate as Arrow as well as People, the Chiska names have an alternate meaning of Wood Arrow, or Feathered Stick (the Palos Flechados or Flechas de Palos names of the Spanish Southwest). Both values of the name are recorded in the Yuchi origin legends as the name Little People of the Arrow Woods, a double, or reduplicated translation of the Chiska name in Athapaskan. One of the Yuchi diminutives is s'i-s'i, as in tsen-shishi, little dog, puppy.

Little People names have a corollary meaning of Enemies, Captives, or Slaves, because in Indian warfare only tractable, younger people or children were taken captive—all adults usually were killed outright or taken only to be tortured and killed. A type example of a "Little People" name is the Yatchillini name applied by the Cree-Ojibway-Monsoni languages to all tribes to the west, and usually supposed to mean "captive, slave." This is

4. Goddard, 1911, p. 117.

5. Riggs, 1852, p. 46.

6. Hodge, 1907, p. 285.



simply the Athapaskan *-yats-*, little, with the *-illini* ending<sup>7</sup> (compare the Navaho patronymic system, Sandoval begay, Sandoval biyazhe). The Athapaskan ending *-yats-*, *-yatsi-*, is found as only a simple vowel change in the *-utsi*, *-otso* endings of the Shoshonean languages, apparently a recent intrusion, and most likely of the horse-raiding period. It seems to me probable that the phenomenon centers in the west, in Athapaskan-Siouan interchange, and the Southeastern occurrences are to be regarded as similarly late intrusions, possibly chiefly via Siouan movements.

The Coza, Cosa, Kusa, Coosa names (e.g.: Hostaquia, Cusabo, Kos-istagi)<sup>8</sup> are important because of their early occurrence on the Georgia-Carolina coast (Early Spanish Florida). The Coronado accounts add Coosa forms from the interior farther west, and a fairly wide variety of forms survived into late historical times in the names of the tribes of the Muskogean group. However, the identification of these names as "Muskogean," hence direct equation with such later "Muskogean" names as Kasihta, or Koasati, is highly misleading.<sup>9</sup> These identifications are particularly important in historical reconstruction because they have been used in direct linking of the historically recorded past with the archaeological sequences, even though two incompatible concepts are involved, Muskogean in the Southeast from time immemorial and Muskogean as recent invaders of the Southeast.

The *-taka*, *-tagi*, ending on such names as Hostaquia, Cofitachi, or Kos-istagi (the busk-name for the Kasihta) is a Western form found in many languages, and found compounded in the Ka-taka or Pa-taka (Padouca) series of names. As Mooney pointed out, the simple form was applied generically to Plains Athapaskan buffalo-hunters, hence its occurrence in Southeastern names is suspect.<sup>10</sup> Assuming *-taka* as a separate ending, is there an acceptable generic meaning for the Kos- names in the Southeast? Catawba has a series of words in Kus- meaning corn or maize, hence in the Eastern Siouan area "Corn People" would be a probable generic meaning for the entire class of names.<sup>11</sup> Crow-Mandan, which shares many early Siouan basic vocabulary words has Kho-, Ko-, forms, but I have not encountered Kus-. The word is known as far north as Virginia at an early

7. Hodge, 1910, p. 993.

8. Hodge, 1907, pp. 342, 736; 1910, p. 1014.

9. Hodge, 1907, pp. 661, 719.

10. Mooney, 1898.

11. Speck, 1934, pp. 2, 79-81.

date because of its occurrence in Strachey's vocabulary, which records many East Coast jargon forms.<sup>12</sup> The word in the form *cuxl-*, for corn or grass, and *-cuxtu-* (*x=s*) in a compound meaning *milpa*, field, is known from Central Mexico,<sup>13</sup> where it would be the equivalent of the *teocentli* word, which also means grass and corn. Since the DeSoto expedition was recruited in Central Mexico a word current there would be recognized in the tribal and place names of the Southeast and these would more likely be the permanently recorded forms. The first occurrences, then, mean only Corn People, or Land of Corn, and do not necessarily identify any one, single surviving group. It would simply be the term applied by non-agricultural coastal peoples to the corn-growers of the interior.

*Cofitachi* (supposedly the DeSoto term for *Yuchi*), with *Cofi-* meaning partridge or quail, is a loan translation of a much more widely distributed form, the *Pa-taka*, *Pen-toca*, *Padouca* forms of the west. The primary meaning is always Other People, Enemy People, hence captives or slaves, but a meaning of "partridge, quail or turkey," is found concurrently in many languages, cutting across stock boundaries. *Pinwa*, meaning turkey, will be recognized by most eastern students. However, the *Ispani* name meaning turkey, fowl has not been recognized as equating with *Ishpani*, Spanish, which explains the Fowl Town names of the Lower Creeks. The Fowl Towns are only Spanish Towns, Towns of the Spanish Indians or Mission Indians.<sup>14</sup> These values hold across the Southeast and as far north as Virginia, being found, for instance, in Strachey's vocabulary, which, as noted, records many East Coast jargon forms.<sup>15</sup> The corresponding values in the High Plains would be in the *Nde-*, *De-*, series, carrying values of People, Enemy People, or Gallinaceous Fowl, hence paralleling the *Pan-*, *Pen-*, *Pin-*, Gallinaceous Fowl series.

The Buffalo People, Hunting People names become important as a class because Southeastern *-yana-* words for buffalo are continuous to the west with the *-lyan-*, *-ayan-*, forms of the *Lipanan* Athapaskan languages of the South Plains, as recorded by the DeSoto-Coronado expeditions. The buffalo forms are taken from published texts of Pliny Earle Goddard and from manuscript vocabularies of Albert S. Gatschet and Gen. Albert Pike in the Bureau of American Ethnology Archives. A comparatively

12. Harrington, 1955, p. 198, *pacassac*, and Sheet 7, *pacassacan*.

13. Totonac: Aschman, 1956.

14. Hodge, 1907, p. 622.

15. Harrington, 1955, p. 199, *ospanno*.

recent west-to-east movement across the Gulf States of actual Athapaskan buffalo hunters, probably post-DeSoto, seems the most likely explanation of the surviving name distributions. The strong clustering of Na-, Nda-, or Da-, names in the Caddoan area, as well as the fact of the Mackenzie kinship system (Athapaskan) cited by Swanton<sup>16</sup> are evidences of a strong and continuing flow away from the Athapaskan Plains toward the Caddoan agriculturalists, that is, the centripetal low-culture to high-culture flow described by Kroeber, but the effects of the buffalo-hunting cultures apparently extended well to the east toward the Atlantic Coast. It is important to note that this Coastal Plain effect is distinct from those influences presumably extending into the southeast from the Ohio Valley-Prairie Peninsula province. Along the Ohio Valley-Virginia-Carolina axis the Buffalo, Buffalo People words are Athapaskan, but from a different series.

The surviving Kiowa Apache and Jicarilla Apache words for Buffalo, Buffalo People, center on the -icha-, izha-, or -iza- forms, the complete Buffalo People name being \*Na-Izha-Nde. Early spellings from the French records give Naichan and Grinaiche. In variant extensions (Handbook forms) this is the Issanti name of the Dakota Sioux, the Dyosyowan, Nayssone, Nahysson, Monahassano, Santee or Yesan, of the Erie-Seneca, the Caddo, the Virginia Siouans, and the Carolina Siouans. Additional meanings in this series are Flint, Flint Knife, Stone Awl, Wolf (Caddoan) and Deer (Muskogean, E. Siouan). At what particular time or place a wandering band of hunters loses its language in that of some larger group is, of course, always moot.

In the Siouan system words for Buffalo are usually in a -ta-syllable, a game-animal generic root, with additional buffalo variants in -pte- or -mite-. Ta- also means corn, however, in the adjacent Athapaskan languages, so the more probable western common denominator meaning is food. It is apparently this Siouan form which is recorded in Yuchi and Natchez w-ti- (Wetine, Wedine) words for buffalo. The -icha-, izha- forms have an ultimate root in an Athapaskan verbal root -izha-, meaning to eat, the Buffalo meaning being derived through a figurative extension, Grass-Eater=Buffalo. Because the Buffalo and Corn words have these ultimate roots meaning food (noun) or to eat (verb) names of the type-form Buffalo-People, Corn-People, or Eater-People, always carry a corollary reading as People-Eaters, hence Cannibals. The identification of the wild, buffalo-hunting

16. Swanton, 1942, pp. 167, 237.

tribes as also being cannibals is widespread, but is not necessarily true in any single instance.

In conclusion, a series of Western name-types, specifically the Little People, Wood People and Buffalo People names, are widely represented in the Southeast and are presumably fairly recent intrusions. The observed evidence suggests that the intrusion of these names correlates with actual movements of nomadic hunting and trading peoples from farther west. The Kus- names, with a value of Corn People, would seem to be more directly derived from Meso-American sources. Within such generic name classes no single exact name identifications can be made and then extended arbitrarily. The tribal name endings fall into classes, and major classes extend far beyond any one language or stock. Similarly, the Corn, Buffalo, Wood, or Little People names form very widely distributed name-types, with the determinant syllables varying independently from the tribal ending in a true Linnaean system. Thus, though an individual name may often be identifiable within a name type, any additional occurrences within the name type must be separately appraised—that is, identifying a name (which may simply be a generic) in no wise guarantees the identification of a people. Pointing out the western distributions of the above names should, however, help considerably in unravelling the tangled records of the century following DeSoto's march. The surviving Eastern forms are secondary or tertiary permutations.<sup>17</sup>

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# SOME EASTERN CHEROKEE DANCES TODAY

JOHN D. GILLESPIE

## *Abstract*

The Eastern Cherokee, who live in western North Carolina, are a tribal remnant which survived the brutal removal policies of 1838. Relatively isolated for a century, they retained much of their cultural individuality until the 1930's; since that time tourists, as well as their white mountain neighbors and Christian missionaries, have increasingly influenced their cultural tastes.

Observations were made of dances performed by members of the Big Cove and Soco Valley sections of the reservation during the fair on October 2-4, 1952. While the dances that remain are largely display stereotypes, they are valuable as living expressions of a culture that would otherwise be ethnologically extinct.

Each community participating in the dances has a dance team, a sponsor, a singer, dance line leader and a woman dance leader. The groups perform on alternate days, and usually present a series of three dances. The order used in each series is significant, tracing in some way back to the ceremonial cycle given in the townhouse before the Removal of 1838.

The Women's, Bear, Horse, and Friendship or *Dilsti* dances are described. Led by the dance line leader, who sets the tempo and initiates the pattern changes, the dances use a variety of marching, stomping and shuffling steps in line and circle patterns. Pantomime is used and so is antiphonal chanting.

In attempting to compare these dances to ascertain cultural influences, it can be noted that several of them have definite similarities to their Iroquoian equivalents; they share the Stomp Dance style with the Southeastern Muskogean, the Creeks, Seminole and Choctaws. Musically, the antiphonal and responsorial techniques as well as the polyphony are probably Mexican-influenced.

## INTRODUCTION

The Eastern Cherokee, who live in western North Carolina, are a tribal remnant which survived the brutal removal policies of 1838. They are actually the descendants of the Middle Dialect-speaking settlements of the pre-Removal Era. In the face of disorganization, removal, resettlement, displacement, and encroaching European influence, the survival of the aboriginal clan and band organization is in itself significant. The problems faced by these people in the past are reflected in the present attitudes of the group and influence the cultural trends present among them today.

The pre-Removal cultural affiliations of the Eastern Cherokee are a problem from the standpoint of ethno-history, but some of the difficulties of correlation have been overcome in the literature now available. Definite cultural contacts can be demonstrated between the Cherokees and the Creeks. A Negro influence has been described in the music from the Birdtown section of the Qualla Reservation by George Herzog.<sup>1</sup> The Iroquoian cor-

1. Herzog, 1944, pp. 130-143.

relations with the Cherokee are less readily found except in the more obvious fields of linguistics and ceremonial studies.

Though the remaining Cherokees were rapidly surrounded by white Europeans coming into the area, they maintained a relative cultural isolation, which is largely the reason they survive today. Not until the 1930's, when the trans-mountain highway across the Great Smokies was completed, was this isolation broken decisively by the summer tourists pouring into the community. Today, many of the Cherokees have been converted to Christianity, and their cultural tastes have been influenced as well. As a result, the native ceremonialism has become extinct and the dances remain only as display stereotypes.

There has been a minimum of cultural contact with other tribes. About 1850 the Catawbas of South Carolina moved into the Eastern Cherokee area, and smoldering tensions developed; some Catawbas intermarried and remained. More recently, Carlisle and Haskell graduates among the Qualla Boundary Cherokees have brought home Pueblo or Ute mates. Omaha Agency employees have intermarried with Western Cherokees.

The most recent influence reported on the Eastern Cherokee Reservation has been the presence of Florida Seminole students at the Cherokee Indian High School. Gertrude P. Kurath, after two sojourns of field work on the dances of this group, reported: "Seminoles at the Cherokee School have taught some of their songs to the Qualla natives."<sup>2</sup> In the course of the field research on Cherokee ceremonialism and dances, some of these students were encountered and interviewed. They were mainly teen-agers from the Brighton and Dania reservations and spoke the Muskogee language. The exact nature of this cultural exchange could not be ascertained, but it seems obvious that this new introduction of songs has not affected the dances to be described. Most of the Cherokee singers and dance leaders speak very little English and their possessing a knowledge of Muskogee is very doubtful.

### THE ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The best description of the Cherokee ceremonial dances is found in Speck and Broom's work, *Cherokee Dance and Drama*.<sup>3</sup> This work describes the ethnological situation of twenty years ago. The present paper describes a stereotyped version in showmanship style. Recordings were first made in 1949 and at the fair

2. Kurath, 1951, p. 131.

3. Speck and Broom, 1951.

in 1952 and 1954. The choreographic observations were made during the fair on October 2-4, 1952. This writer found it an almost impossible task to both record the music and observe the dance movements satisfactorily.

The Eastern Cherokee Reservation or the Qualla Boundary consists of a geographic area of 63,000 acres with a population of nearly 4,000 people, of whom 3,600 are Indians on the tribal rolls. The center of the economic life is the village of Cherokee, formerly known as Yellow Hill, where the agent, missionaries and Indian traders live. The trans-mountain highway bisects the town, and the junction of U. S. Routes 19 and 441 is there. The whole life of the Eastern Cherokee now revolves around the highway routes through their lands.

The town of Cherokee lies at an elevation of 2,000 feet above sea level and has the flora characteristic of the Temperate Zone. Topographically, it lies in a mountainous zone bisected with narrow valleys. Socio-politically, the reservation is divided into "townships" that were laid out by the Cherokees' first agent, Col. William Thomas, in the 1840's. Many of these villages are rural communities like those of their white neighbors but are named for the Cherokee clans. These communities consist of Big Cove, the Soco section of Wolfstown and Paintown, Yellow Hill or the village of Cherokee, and Birdtown. The above-named sections speak the Kituhwa or Middle Dialect, while the Snowbird community in Graham County speaks the Atali or Overhill Dialect, as found also in Oklahoma.

The area of the main reservation is culturally heterogeneous. The Soco Valley and Big Cove form one area, and Birdtown forms another. The Snowbird community has few cultural contacts with the main reservation, as it lies over sixty miles further west. It was from the Big Cove and Soco sections that the dance observations were made.

In the past, anthropologists have concentrated on the Big Cove section because of its cultural isolation. Among these have been James Mooney, Frans Olbrechts, Leonard Broom, William H. Gilbert and Frank G. Speck. In recent times, John Witthoft has worked in the Yellow Hill and Birdtown sections as well. Linguists like Ernest Bender and William C. Reybourn have worked in the Soco Valley and Big Cove. Only William H. Gilbert has done work at the Snowbird Community. These scholars have collected data describing the local diversity present on the Eastern Cherokee Reservation as a result of the re-

moval policy of the federal government, following 1835 when the Treaty of New Echota was signed. The above areas were where the Cherokee refugees congregated.

The Birdtown and Soco Valley sections have had more contact with the white mountain people and with the commercial tourist aspects of the American culture. Even in face of these corrosive outside influences, the Cherokee dances retain much of their aboriginal flavor. The Big Cove versions are found in the Soco Valley as well. The informants lived off the main stream of the tourist traffic. Most of these men spoke the native language habitually in their families and retained many of the intangible elements of Cherokee culture in their lives, even if they did not really recognize them as such.

The dance observations were made at the dance platform on the athletic field of the Cherokee Indian High School, where James Mooney observed the Cherokee ball games and dances in the late 1880's. In the hills above the school, the symphonic drama, "Unto These Hills," written by Kermit Hunter with music by the Western Cherokee composer, Jack Fredrick Kilpatrick, is presented each summer. Near the same site a simulated old Cherokee village was constructed, reviving the arts and life of the period of two hundred years ago. This is the modern cultural setting for the dances and other Cherokee cultural revivals or expressions during the summer and fair time.

#### A SKETCH OF THE INFORMANT

Dave Lossie was born in the Big Cove section of the reservation in 1891, and his Cherokee name is Dawun Losini, or David Lawson. He was only a child when James Mooney was doing his anthropological studies among the Eastern Cherokee. Dave is a member of the Wolf Clan and is married to a daughter of Nika-jack George, who is a member of the Bird Clan. The George family live in the Big Witch section of the Soco Valley. Dave moved over into this area and lives near his relatives-in-law, the typical matrilocal residence pattern.

Dave Lossie recorded songs with Will West Long's group for Speck in 1934-35 and it is from this source that his knowledge of the dance rituals was secured. His knowledge of the songs provides us with an insight into the aboriginal dance-song cycles of the Kituhwa-speaking Cherokees. Dances which are ethnologically extinct, except in the memories of a few old Cherokees, are living expressions of a bygone era, so long as the fair encourages their performance.



Dave's scope and knowledge of the dance cycle is very extensive. On the basis of observation and direct inquiry, he can recall the Pigeon, Raccoon, Horse, Green Corn, War, Eagle, Warrior Stomp, Women's, *Dilsti* or Friendship, Quail, Mask or Booger, Knee Deep or *Dustu*, Corn, Bear, and others common among the Big Cove versions. He is able to identify songs and to serve as a translator for texts. It is apparent that many of the dances are known only by their movements and music instead of by name. His knowledge of Cherokee music is mainly of the dance cycle, but it is possible that he knows individual songs of the protection, medicinal and hunting cycles as well.

The Lossie home in the Big Witch area consists of a log dwelling that is more than one hundred years old. It has a breezeway also common to the home of the southern white mountaineer. The family consists of five sons and two daughters. In the early 1930's, Dave lost his hands when they were cut off in an accident with an axe. Since then he has developed a remarkable dexterity with the stumps that remain. His knowledge of English is limited, but he apparently understands more than he can speak. There is a great affection among the members of this family, especially towards the children. They gain a living from the soil and tourist attraction work.

Life here in the mountains is hard at times, but it is conducive to creative skills and endeavors. Nearby on the Big Witch live the Cherokee sculptors and woodcarvers, Watty and Going Back Chiltosky, who are nationally famous. The summer season is one of contact with the tourist, while fall and winter are seasons of contemplation and harvest. The keen mind may find expression through various creative outlets.

### THE DANCE ENVIRONMENT

The wooden dance platform is about thirty feet square. It has microphone and electrical outlets. Overhead are loudspeakers and floodlights. This platform is on the western edge of the athletic field, and it has an amphitheatre that seats about two hundred and fifty people. Directly in the center above this place is the control booth for the sound equipment and lighting. It was from this vantage point that the recordings and dance observations were made.

The recordings that have been made consist of over two and one-half hours of wire and tape materials. Besides dance songs, they contain a cacophonous mixture of crowd noises, loudspeaker

reverberations, announcer interruptions, and like distractions, typical of the carnival atmosphere.

The dances presented are remembered by rote and are not practiced except for a few weeks preceding fair time. Being stereotype and archaic, they reflect the pre-Removal period of cultural exchange between the Cherokees and the Creeks, the Eastern Siouans, Iroquois, and the Shawnees.

Each community participating in the dances has a dance team, a sponsor, a singer, a dance line leader, and a woman dance leader. The role of the dance sponsor and singer is sometimes combined in the same person. This is true in the case of Dave Lossie. He can recall from memory numerous songs which have a set style and method. The pattern of presentation of these dances is significant; but as to how it is formulated, one can only say it is a reflection of the old ceremonial cycle given in the townhouse before the Removal of 1838.

The pattern presented at the fair in 1952 by the groups from the various townships is given as follows:

#### First Day

1. Dave Lossie, singer-sponsor and Daniel Hornbuckle, dance line leader: Bear, Horse, and Friendship dances in the morning.
2. In the afternoon, the Corn, Quail, and Friendship dances. This group came from the Big Witch Branch of the Soco Valley.

#### Second Day

1. Eps Welch, sponsor; Kinsey Squirrel, singer, and Jack Taylor, dance line leader. Danced in the morning were the Bear, Horse, and Friendship dances. This group was from the Birdtown section.
2. Ammonita Sequoyah-Runningwolf, sponsor-singer. Corn and Friendship dances, evening performance. This group was from Big Cove.

#### Third Day

1. Lossie's group in the Women's, Corn, and Friendship dances, in the morning.
2. In the evening, the same group did the Corn, Quail, Bear, Horse, and Friendship dances.

It can be seen that the usual pattern is of a group of three dances ending always in the Friendship Dance. The groups make

their presentations on alternate days. Lossie's group usually begins with the Bear, Corn, or Women's dances. The old, surviving linked patterns of Bear-Horse and Corn-Quail are seen in this group's program. The Bear-Horse pattern occurs in the Birdtown preferences also. The Ball Game Dance is being revived as an evening performance preceding the main dances by the winning team of the day's game. Even in modern dress, the old ceremonial pattern shows beneath the showmanship.

The dance line leader is usually a man and he heads a column of dancers. He leads the pantomime and initiates the antiphonal chanting used in some of the dances. The women are led by a woman leader who follows immediately behind her male counterpart, although the role of the women is less significant. She has the turtle shell rattles on her knees and coordinates the dancer's rhythms with the tempo of the chanting. The other women wear the knee rattles as well.

The costumes worn by the dancers are imitations of the hunting jackets of the pre-Removal days for the men and the long Mother Hubbard dresses for the women. The costumes are yellow, trimmed with black, red, and other gay colors. Imitation buckskin fringe is seen on some of the men's pants. The men also wear feathers in a scalp lock. Much of this manner of dress is of a commercial innovation and does not predate the 1930's.

#### DESCRIPTIONS OF CHEROKEE DANCES

The dances to be described consist of the Women's, Bear, Horse, and the Friendship or *Dilsti* Dance. These dances were chosen because of their frequent occurrence in the presentations at the fair.

##### Women's Dance

The Women's Dance consists of a counterclockwise circling movement. It is the only dance of the Cherokee in which the women take a prominent part. The dance begins on the eastern side of the platform and ends on the western edge. The dancers consist of six women who make two preliminary circling movements before the men join in at the end of the line. The women's dance line leader leads the circling group.

The men's step is the double stomp. It consists of two stationary motions of each foot in the same location. The movement begins on the right foot and proceeds to the left, and the process is repeated. The basic movement consists of lifting the foot in the same position twice before moving on to the other foot. The

women use a slow shuffle version of this male double stomp; their motions are more subdued than that of the men.

### Bear Dance

The Bear Dance has the same counterclockwise circling as the Women's Dance; however, in this dance the men take the prominent part. The male dance line leader acts as an initiator of the actions of the dance, and his pattern is repeated by the other dancers. In this pattern, an antiphonal movement takes place along with the singing. The men alternate with the women all the way down the dance line-circle. The movements are restricted to the upper extremities and the trunk of the body. The beginning tempo is slow but increases as the dance gets under way.

The first pattern of group movements consists of four revolutions around the dance platform with a marching step. The tempo is increased just before the next command is given by the dance line leader.

Upon the command, "Stay, dance hard!" the dancers increase the emphasis of the stomping, with the marching step as before. The tempo reaches its peak just before the dance stops. Like the Women's Dance, it begins on the east side and ends on the west.

The dance line leader dances forward and then backward facing the other dancers in the line-circle. His hands are used in a pawing motion; the women respond by a scratching movement at the men. These patterns of movement are done during the first four revolutions and following the command, "Dance hard!" Both men and women do these motions along with the leader.

The dance line leader uses a stride-shuffle step when he comes to a curve in the dance circling pattern. This step consists of lifting the foot off the ground and keeping it parallel with the ground as it is brought down again. The step begins on the right foot, proceeds to the left, then repeats the pattern. Actually, the foot is directed backward at an oblique angle as he moves around the circle.

At the command, "Stay!" the single stomp step is used by the men. It is also used in the Corn Dance. This step consists of a hop from one foot to another, beginning on the right to the left and return, keeping the bottom of the foot parallel to the ground. The double stomp step is used otherwise except when the command is given. The women's step is a slow shuffle, as

found in the Women's Dance. It consists of shortened glides of the feet beginning on the right to the left foot and return.

### Horse Dance

The Horse Dance is a line-chorus type in which the men and women dance alternately. The dancers in their lines are on a north-south axis but move from the east to the west and return. The four parts of the dance have distinctive patterns of movement.

The first group pattern consists of moving to the west end of the platform, turning completely around, going to the eastern edge, and repeating this movement a second time. The second group pattern consists of back stepping to the middle of the platform and proceeding to the eastern edge without turning around. The third group movement repeats the first period, and the fourth parallels the second one. The dance ends on the eastern side of the platform where it began.

The men and women dancers link their hands together throughout all the movements, except when they turn completely around. Then they simply drop them and re-link them when in position. Most of the action of this dance is footwork.

The foot is lifted off the floor or ground, being kept parallel with the ground as it is moved, and brought down with the heel in the same flat position. The sole is brought down in a nearly flat position. The dancer moves from the right to the left foot and back. In the forward movement, the stride is exaggerated, and in the back stride-shuffle the angle of the heel is slanted so that the clomping motion is emphasized. This step is found also in the Quail Dance but in a somewhat more subdued version. The tempo of this dance increases toward the end as the climax is reached.

### Friendship or *Dilsti* Dance

The Cherokee word *dilsti* means "mixed." This probably refers to the mixed sexes that perform the dance. Its basic movement is a counterclockwise circling. The dance line leader and the singer become the same individual, as the dance is antiphonal; there is an alternation of the sexes. Actually, this dance is more nearly a cycle because of the varied patterns which occur in it.

The movements are initiated by the dance line leader, who can change the tempo, begin new verses, and direct whatever other shifts are necessary. There are definite pauses between the group patterns of movement, after which the dancers circle the

platform once before resuming the dance. Before the dance begins, a chair is placed in the middle of the dance circle for use in the later patterns of the dance.

The first or introductory movement consists of two circuits of the dance platform by the men and women in alternation. At the beginning of the second circuit, the men wave their hands in a horseshoe-shaped arc in front of them at about a forty-five degree angle.

The second movement is a couple pattern. The men turn and face their women companions, join hands with them, and then swing to the outside of the circle still holding hands with the women partners. The couples then regasp hands in their side-by-side position. Following this preliminary movement, the odd numbered couples are behind the dance line leader; the even numbered couples are behind the second couple of dancers, who have unwoven themselves from the back of the original dance line of mixed sexes. This swapping of positions is accomplished by the process of one couple's swinging to the outside and behind another.

The third movement consists of a separation of the sexes into distinct groups with the men at the head of the line. The male dance line leader turns and faces his dancers. At this signal, the men begin to unweave forward from the women dancers by swinging to the outside as previously described. The pattern thus formed is separation-integration-separation-integration. The men place their hands on their hips throughout this pattern. The dance leader faces the other dancers continuously during this period.

The fourth movement is the same as the second or couple movement pattern. At the beginning, however, the visitor to the group is placed in the middle of the circle to sit in the chair previously placed there. At the command, "Stay!" the single stomp step is used, and the tempo increases accordingly.

The fifth movement is a counterclockwise circling. The hands had been dropped at the command of "Dance hard!" in the previous pattern, and men and women stand alternately behind one another. On command, the men and women join hands and face inward toward the honored person. Then they advance a few times toward the center and back out to the outer edge of the dance circle.

In the sixth movement, the visitor joins the dance line at any convenient location and the participants dance a few revo-



lutions. Following this pattern, the dance line leader changes the character of the antiphonal chant, and the dancers begin the Snake Dance.

The seventh or Snake Dance movement is a serpentine meandering off the dance platform at the southwestern edge. The tempo of the dance is slow in the beginning, increases following the "Dance fast!" command, and winds up in the climax of the snake movements. The dance circle is approximately twenty feet in diameter.

The double stomp step and slow shuffle are used for slow tempi, and the single stomp step is used by the men during the fast tempi. The dance line leader uses the stride-shuffle step when he goes diagonally around a corner of the dance circle.

### CULTURAL COMPARISONS

The one thing most apparent in these dances is their intricate patterns. In some portions the Friendship Dance is as complicated as the movements of the Quadrille and Reels of Europe and England. As for cultural contacts and influences upon the Cherokees, one can say that the dances here described are archaic remnants of the Cherokee ceremonial cycle which persisted in the cultural isolation of the Qualla Reservation in North Carolina. The only participants are the older Indians and their families. In view of this, the possibility of European influences on the Cherokee dances is minimized. Influences to be looked for are those which came from the surrounding tribes; from the Creeks and Iroquois most particularly, and from the Eastern Siouans and Shawnees to a lesser degree.

Choreographic comparisons are difficult in the Southeast because of the scarcity of descriptive statements and accurate data. Musicological comparisons have been made between Cherokee and other influences, which might reveal the cultural cross-currents of the area. Herzog has found Negro influences in Cherokee Friendship or *Dilsti* Dance versions from the Birdtown section on recordings made by Speck.<sup>4</sup> Kurath has found that the Cherokee Bear, Mask, Stomp, and Corn dances all possess similarities to their Iroquoian equivalents.<sup>5</sup> They share the Stomp Dance style with the Southeastern Muskogean, the Creeks, Seminoles, and Choctaws.

Even on the Eastern Cherokee Reservation, cultural diversity

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4. Herzog, 1944, pp. 130-143.

5. Kurath, 1951, pp. 122-123, 130.

exists. In his study of Cherokee bird nomenclature, Witthoft states that: "Some differences in classification and terminology are noted between the data from Birdtown and that from the Big Cove-Paintown-Wolftown portion of the reservation. Some linguistic differences also noted between these sections, and it seems probable that an old areal differentiation exists here."<sup>6</sup> The Big Cove-Soco Valley represents the cultural descendants of the Middle Dialect-speaking towns of the pre-Removal era, and the people of the Birdtown section are probably the descendants of a fused population from the Overhill, Valley, and possibly Upper Georgia towns who speak the Kituhwa dialect now. The members of the Snowbird Community in Graham County, North Carolina, definitely are Overhill or Atali dialect speakers who may be descendants of Valley Town settlements. A thorough community study will be necessary before all of these cross-connections are known.

Yet, the patterns of the old ceremonial cycles persist in the selections that the dance teams make at the fair today. The Bear-Horse, and Corn-Pigeon or Corn-Quail dances were all given after midnight and utilize percussion instruments. They are essentially imitative and lack ceremonial or ritual significance today. The *Dilsti* or Friendship Dance always ends the series.

The individual dances show some of their origins when they are compared with other Cherokee or tribal types. The Women's Dance is very likely the Cherokee Round Dance. It occurred as a beginning dance at the fair, but Gilbert describes it as one given early in the morning just before dawn to end a series.<sup>7</sup> The Bear Dance is a male counterpart of the Women's Dance, the men taking the prominent part. Social expressions between the sexes are found here. Musically and choreographically it is similar to the Iroquois Bear Society Dance.<sup>8</sup> The Horse Dance is a recent creation since historical contact with the European settlers. Choreographically, it resembles the Quail or Partridge Dance of the Cherokees and possibly is an outgrowth of it. The Creeks have a Horse Dance, but it seems to be a circular dance instead of a line-chorus type.<sup>9</sup>

The remaining problem is the origin of the Cherokee *Dilsti* or Friendship Dance. The beginning movement resembles the Creek Leaf Dance in which, according to Speck, "The participants

6. Witthoft, 1946, p. 373.

7. Gilbert, 1943, p. 267.

8. Kurath, 1951, pp. 122-123.

9. Speck, 1911, p. 175.

wave their arms and hands extended at their sides, imitating leaves blown by the wind."<sup>10</sup>

For a source for the final movement of this series, in which partners are alternated, one looks to the Iroquois Claspings Hands Dance. "Men and women partners frequently alternate in the line."<sup>11</sup> A parallel is also seen in the climax of this same dance, where the dancers "joined hands and performed a circling dance."<sup>12</sup> It is apparent that the choreographic elements of the Cherokee *Dilsti* have relationships to the Creek and Iroquois patterns.

### SUMMARY

The qualities of the music of the Southeastern cultural area are among those discussed by Bruno Nettl for the whole eastern United States. He says concerning this area:

"The area including the Southeastern United States and the Eastern Coast of the continent as far north as Labrador is in all probability, one musical area. . . . Simplicity of musical style is greatest in the northern part of the Eastern area, while the South is relatively complex. The main characteristics are undulating melodic music, relatively short songs, . . . the use of forms which consist of several short sections with iterative and reverting relationships, relative simplicity and asymmetry in the rhythmic organization, and perhaps the most distinctive feature, antiphonal and responsorial technique and some rudimentary polyphony including possibly imitation and canon. Although there is considerable difference between the tribal styles, the entire area is relatively homogenous and need not be divided into subareas.

"In the Southeast the average tonal range is about a sixth. . . . The scales of the Choctaw are mainly pentatonic and tetratonic. Of the Creek and Yuchi scales, about 80 per cent are pentatonic and tetratonic but tritonic and ditonic scales, as well as some with only one tone . . . are . . . found. . . . The intervals of Creek and Yuchi scales also vary; major seconds are most frequent, and minor seconds are comparatively common. The simplest forms in the Eastern area are those which consist of one short motif repeated several times. It is found among the Creek. . . . It is in these songs that antiphonal and responsorial techniques are prominent; the single phrase is sung alternately by a leader and a group, or by two individuals, with minor variations."

In conclusion, he further states: "It seems probable that antiphonal and responsorial techniques as well as polyphony came from Mexico, or that at least the stimulus for them came

10. Speck, 1911, p. 165.

11. Speck, 1911, p. 152.

12. Speck, 1911, p. 153.

from the evidently complex music of the Aztecs and the Mayas. . . . It is likely that the Southeastern United States is the climax of the Mexican-influenced developments. . . ."<sup>13</sup> One should not rule out the influence of Negro music in the Southeast because of the elaborate rhythmic qualities that most of it possesses.

The Cherokees definitely share these musical traits with their neighbors, the Muskogean, Eastern Siouans, and with other ethnic groups of the area. The choreographic traits are less well known. The stomp style, present in the Cherokee dances described, is also found among the Creeks, Choctaws, Seminoles, and other tribes influenced by this style. It is safe to say that the Cherokees are musically midway between the northern and southern sections of the eastern area of the United States, but choreographically closer to their Muskogean neighbors.<sup>14</sup>

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13. Nettl, 1954, pp. 359-362, 367.

14. Special thanks are due to Mrs. Gertrude Kurath for reading and commenting on this manuscript.

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